

congested conditions rather than motorist unfamiliarity with the highway or prevailing conditions. Additional signs are unlikely to address this accident trend.

2.3 TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM) ALTERNATIVES

Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies include staggered work hours, ridesharing, and telecommuting. Due to the rural nature of the project area and the low population and population densities especially in Jones County (population density of 21 persons per square mile), the TDM Alternatives stated below would not significantly improve travel in the surrounding area to meet the purpose of and need for this project.

2.3.1. Ridesharing

Ridesharing, such as carpools and vanpools, is generally viewed as more convenient than bus transit with regard to access, door-to-door times, and comfort. Van service is provided by Craven County and is discussed more in Section 2.4. No data is available on the amount of ridesharing practiced along US 17. However, this strategy would not improve the route's capability to meet its mandated objectives as part of the Intrastate System, the North Carolina Strategic Highway Corridor System, or the federal STRAHNET.

2.3.2. Flexible Work Schedule

Staggered work hours, flex-time, or modified workweeks can be implemented by large employers served by a corridor who experience congestion at the entrances or exits to their businesses. Although US 17 does provide access to some large businesses beyond the limits of the study area, it is not expected that such adjustments to work schedules would substantially reduce peak hour traffic volumes within the study area. A majority of the commuters using US 17 are commuting to employment centers in Jacksonville or New Bern, beyond the limits of the study area.

2.3.3. Telecommuting

The trend in telecommuting among workers throughout the country is continuing to grow. Workers are allowed to work from home to reduce travel and provide more flexibility. Telecommuting is available where telephone and internet infrastructure has been updated to accommodate increased bandwidth of high speed internet connections. No data is available on the amount of telecommuting that occurs in the study area. However, this strategy would not improve the route's capability to meet its mandated objectives as part of the Intrastate System, the North Carolina Strategic Highway Corridor System, or the federal STRAHNET.